



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

# PERMIT INSTRUCTIONS, PROCEDURES FOR Building Demolition/Removal

CITY OF SAN DIEGO DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
1222 FIRST AVENUE, MS 301, SAN DIEGO, CA 92101-4153  
Call (619) 446-5300 for appointments and (619) 446-5000 for information.

INFORMATION  
BULLETIN  
**710**  
May 2001

This Information Bulletin describes the procedures and required permits for demolishing or removing buildings or structures located in the City of San Diego. For more detailed information see Land Development Code Section 129.0501.

Copies of the Land Development Code are available through our web site, or may be purchased at the Development Services Center, 1222 First Avenue.

## I. WHEN IS A PERMIT REQUIRED?

A permit is required for the demolition/removal of all structures except those exempted per Land Development Code Section 129.0503. Even though a demolition/removal permit may not be required, separate permits and/or approvals may be required for demolition/removal of structures or buildings that are historic, potentially historic or located in special zones or districts. You must contact the Development Services Department at 1222 First Avenue, third floor, or phone (619) 446-5000 prior to demolition.

All open plumbing and sewer lines must be capped in an approved manner whether a demolition permit is required or not. No permit is required for the capping of the sewer.

## II. YOUR OPTIONS FOR SERVICE

Appointments are available for more efficient service. Appointments may be scheduled in person at, 1222 First Avenue, third floor, or by phone at (619) 446-5300.

Demolition permits may be issued without an appointment. Begin the permit process by going to the Check-In counter, 1222 First Avenue, third floor.

## III. FORMS TO COMPLETE

**A. General Application:** All demolition permits require the completion of a General Application (DS-3032). Instructions for completing the application are on the reverse side of the application. This form is available at the Development Services Center, by fax, mail or through our web site.

In the description of work include the year the structure was originally constructed, number of building stories, the building square footage, and, if residential, the number of bedrooms.

*Note: A contractor with an A or a C-21 class license may be issued a demolition permit. A contractor with a B-1 class license may be issued a demolition permit if that contractor's name appears on a current construction permit for the site. An owner-builder may*

## Documents referenced in this Information Bulletin:

- General Application, DS-3032
- Hazardous Material Questionnaire, DS-3163
- Information Bulletin 101, Building Valuation Schedule
- Information Bulletin 102, General Fee Schedule
- Information Bulletin 119, Requirements for Construction Debris Disposal
- Building Code Amendments
- California Building Code

*also be issued a demolition permit.*

**B. Hazardous Materials Questionnaire:** A Hazardous Materials Questionnaire (DS-3163) is required when a commercial structure or building is being demolished. It is necessary to know whether asbestos is in the building to complete this questionnaire. This form is available at the Development Services Center, by fax or by mail.

## IV. REQUIRED NOTIFICATIONS AND APPROVALS

In addition to the General Application, you may need the following items in order to obtain your demolition permit.

☐ **A. Gas and electric service:** A Certificate of Discontinuance of Service for each building to be demolished is required from San Diego Gas & Electric Company, (619) 230-7800.

☐ **B. Telephone service:** A Certificate of Discontinuance of Service for each building to be demolished is required from Pacific Bell, (619) 266-4683.

☐ **C. Coastal Commission Approval:** For structures located in the Coastal Zone, approval from City of San Diego Development Services or from the State of California Coastal Commission is required. Contact the Development Services Center at (619) 446-5000 to determine the coastal jurisdiction for your project.

☐ **D. San Diego Unified Port District:** An approval stamp from the Port District on a set of plans is required for demolition of structures located within the Port District. The stamp must show the Port District Permit number and the Coastal Development

Permit number. Contact the Property Engineering Office of the Port District, (619) 686-6364.

❑ **E. Special zoning districts:** Contact Development Services, 1222 First Avenue, (619) 446-5000, to determine both demolition and development regulations at the site.

❑ **F. Historical Review:** For structures 45 years or older and located within the sensitive area of the Historic Sensitivity Maps, the City must determine if a site-specific historical resources survey is required. Based on photographs of the site and each building facade, records of building permits or sewer and water permits, and the Building Record from the County of San Diego Assessor's Office, provided by the applicant, City staff will determine if a site-specific survey is required. If your project received prior discretionary approval, please submit a copy of that approval only. No additional building record information is needed. Contact Development and Permit Information at (619) 446-5000 for more information.

❑ **G. Historical sites:** No permit for the demolition, substantial alteration, or removal of any building, structure or site listed in the register of historic sites can be issued without a review by the Historic Site Board. *Exception:* The City Manager may determine that demolition, removal or substantial alteration is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety or general welfare.

Trees, plants or other major landscaping cannot be removed from any property designated as an historic site without the prior approval of the City Manager. Contact the Land Development Review Division, 1222 First Avenue, (619) 446-5460, for further information.

❑ **H. Service stations** A permit for removal of underground fuel storage tanks is required from the San Diego Fire Department, Technical Services, (619) 533-4477.

A permit is required from County Environmental Health Services, (619) 338-2222.

If the excavation or the embankment (fill) exceeds 5-feet in depth, exceeds 200 cubic yards, or is located in the public right-of-way, a grading permit may be required. Soil remediation by removal and replacement may also require a grading permit. Contact the Land Development Review Division at (619) 446-5280 to determine if a grading permit will be required. If the tank removal is to install new tanks to replace the existing tanks, no grading permits are required.

❑ **I. Buildings with wells or septic tanks:** An inspection is required from the County of San Diego Health Department for demolition of any building

on property which has a well or septic tank. Contact County Environmental Health Services, (619) 236-5938.

❑ **J. Buildings with asbestos:** If the building being demolished contains any asbestos, 20 day notice must be given to the County Air Pollution Control District, (619) 236-5938. Your Hazardous Materials Questionnaire (DS-3163) must be approved by the County Air Pollution Control District before a permit will be issued.

❑ **K. Buildings and structures over three stories high or 36 feet in height:** No demolition permit can be issued until the applicant provides evidence that a separate permit has been obtained from the Industrial Relations Department of the State of California (CAL/OSHA), (619) 637-5534 (appointment necessary).

❑ **L. Completion of work bonding:** When the structure being demolished is over 6000 square feet, a surety bond, cashier's check, or cash in the amount of \$10,000 must be deposited with the City of San Diego. Surety bonds must be on a form available from the Development Services Center, (619) 446-5000. The bond will be released by the Field Inspector after final inspection of the work. The bond will be returned in approximately six weeks. For questions regarding bond release, call Records Section, (619) 446-5200.

❑ **M. Insurance requirements:** A Certificate of Insurance is required for public liability in the amount of not less than \$50,000/one person, \$100,000/more than one person, and for property damage in the amount of not less than \$5,000 per occurrence.

If required, proof of workers' compensation insurance must be provided.

## V. FEES

The fee for demolition permits can be determined using Information Bulletin 101, "Building Valuation," and 102, "General Fee Schedule."

The demolition permit fee, bond, public liability and property damage insurance can be waived when the structure (not more than two stories in height) is declared by a government authority to be unsafe or a public nuisance. A copy of the letter of declaration must be presented when applying for the demolition permit. Workers' compensation insurance requirements still apply even if fees are waived.

## VI. REGULATION SUMMARY

Additional regulations that apply to demolition permits include:

**A. Expiration of Permit:** The permit will expire if the work authorized is not started within 60 days and is not completed within 90 days. One 60 day extension may be granted if work is delayed for reasons beyond the permittee's control. Application for extension must be made in writing prior to the expiration of the permit to Development Services Department, 1222 First Ave., Mail Station 301, San Diego, CA 92101-4153.

**B. Disposal of demolition debris:** When recycling is not feasible, all removed dirt, rock, building materials and debris must be transported in a lawful manner to an approved landfill. Refer to Information Bulletin 119, "Requirements for Recycling and Disposal of Construction and Demolition Debris."

**C. Inspections:**

**1. Pre-demolition inspection:** A pre-demolition inspection must be made before any work is started to determine the need for protection of pedestrians, public property, and public utilities as defined by the California Building Code. *Exception:* If the distance from the building to any public right-of-way is greater than the height of the building, no pre-demolition inspection is required. Call (858) 581-7111 for Field Inspection after the permit has been purchased and before work has started.

**2. Pedestrian protection:** Protection for pedestrians may be required before demolition can begin. This protection can be a railing, fence and/or canopy, depending on the distance from the demolition to pedestrians. See Table 1 to determine if your project will need pedestrian protection.

A traffic control permit is required when erecting barricades and pedestrian protection in the public right-of-way. Phone (619) 446-5150 for information.

**3. Sewer cap inspection:** Call for a sewer cap inspection, (858) 581-7111, after the capping has been completed and before the caps are covered. The sewer line must be capped on private property within 5 feet of the property line. An approved no-hub, clamp-type coupling with cap, or other approved capping device, is required. Concrete fill is not acceptable. It is recommended that this inspection be made while the demolition work is in progress.

**4. Underground fuel storage tank removal:** Approval is required from the San Diego Fire Department, (619) 533-4477. Fuel storage tanks must be

**Table 33-A**

Pedestrian Protection/California Building Code		
Height of construction	Distance from construction (x 304.8 for mm)	Protection required
8 feet or less	Less than 6 feet	Railing
	6 feet or more	None
More than 8 feet	Less than 6 feet	Fence and canopy
	6 feet or more but not more than one-fourth the height of construction	Fence and canopy
	6 feet or more, but between one-fourth to one-half the height of construction	Fence
	6 feet or more, but exceeding one-half the construction height	None

filled in an approved manner or removed and the resulting excavation backfilled and compacted to 90 percent density. If the tanks are removed and the excavation backfilled, a soils compaction report must be submitted to and approved by the Field Inspector (858) 492-5070 (information) and (858) 581-7111 (to schedule inspections).

**5. Backfill of septic tank, seepage pit, cesspool, cistern or well:** This inspection is required if a septic tank, cistern or well exists on the property. Approval is required from the County Environmental Health Services, (619) 236-5938.

**6. Final inspection:** Call Inspection Services, (858) 581-7111, for a final inspection when the demolition is complete, i.e., when all debris has been removed from the site, when any remaining excavations or depressions have been restored to the level of the adjacent ground, and any damage to public property has been corrected.